

F.R.

15/3

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(9)

Secretary of State (L&B) M

cc PS/Mr Patten (L&B) M
PS/Mr Scott (L&B) M
PS/PUS (L&B) M
PS/Mr Bloomfield M 3/3
Mr Brennan
Mr Merifield M
Mr Gilliland M
Mr Chesterton o/r
Mr Carvill M
Mr Lyon
Miss Elliott
Mr Reeve M
Mr K Carlisle MP



2-7-11 HCS 13

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

On 27 June I met with Mr Brian Attwood the Director of the NDIIA. He had returned the previous day from a brief visit to Belfast and had observed the Direct Rule Renewal Debate. Over the past two months he seems to have fallen very much under the spell of John Hume. The points of interest which emerged from our discussion are as follows.

- (i) He had expected the NDIIA project for Northern Ireland to run into some difficulties at the Executive Board of the National Endowment for Democracy. However, at that meeting he had received support from Henry Kissinger and assured me that, through Judge Clark, President Reagan had been put in the picture and was supportive.
- (ii) The NDIIA's future remains uncertain because although the House of Representatives voted to restore funding to the two Party foundations problems remain in the Senate. Nevertheless, he does not expect this to have any affect on the Northern Ireland project because after the initial injection of funds which we had discussed at our previous meeting (c. \$70,000) the NDIIA would be acting only as a channel for money from the SDLP's friends in the USA eg Mr Walter Dunphy).
- (iii) The NDIIA has over the last fortnight had three experts in Northern Ireland assessing the SDLP's needs. They produced a two-year basic strategy for the Party in organisational terms.

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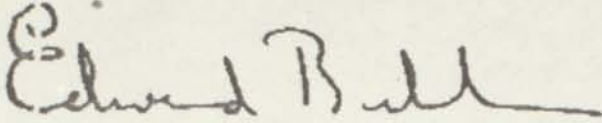
which is supposed to be complemented by a political strategy produced within the Party. Amongst the proposal put to the Executive were extensive use of computers for servicing members, for targetting particular opinion and social groups and media training courses. The SDLP Executive, in the absence of John Hume, had reacted enthusiastically to the NDIIA proposals.

- (iv) Mr Attwood had obviously been impressed by John Hume's performance in the House the night before and by the SDLP's renewed espousal of power sharing as a way forward within Northern Ireland. He thought that the NDIIA advice could lift SDLP morale and equip them better to win at least a further two seats at the next Westminster elections. Nevertheless, he admitted to having been taken rather aback by the reaction of some people at the SDLP Executive when the possibility of a breakdown in the Anglo-Irish discussions had been mooted. Many people, including a number of moderates, had questioned whether the SDLP would even bother to fight the next Westminster elections were the Anglo-Irish process to founder. He had reported this to John Hume who seemed to have been rather surprised and concerned.
- (v) The previous week Mr Attwood had been visited by Peter Robinson. Mr Robinson had not been seeking funds for the DUP and Mr Attwood was slightly unclear as to why he had requested a meeting. Of greatest interest were Robinson's remarks about your meeting with Dr Paisley. Robinson told Mr Attwood that assurances had been given that the Irish Government would be given no more than a consultative role and as far as he (Robinson) was concerned that was wearable if progress could be made internally and on the security front. Mr Robinson had expressed himself relieved to be in America for the first part of the marching season.

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(vi) Mr Attwood believes that the backlog of Assembly salaries now owing to SDLP Members is not an inconsiderable factor in motivating some of their Assembly members to want to get involved in an Assembly.



EDWARD BICKHAM

1 July 1985

- 3 -

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